

## **METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR PROVIDING DOCUMENT RETENTION USING CRYPTOGRAPHY**

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### **ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

Techniques for utilizing security criteria to implement document retention for electronic documents are disclosed. The security criteria can also limit when, how and where access to the electronic documents is permitted. The security criteria can  
10 pertain to keys (or ciphers) used to secure (e.g., encrypt) electronic files (namely, electronic documents), or to unsecure (e.g., decrypt) electronic files already secured. At least a portion of the security criteria can be used to implement document retention, namely, a document retention policy. After a secured electronic document has been retained for the duration of the document retention policy, the associated  
15 security criteria becomes no longer available, thus preventing subsequent access to the secured electronic document. In other words, access restrictions on electronic documents can be used to prevent access to electronic documents which are no longer to be retained.